

Caregiver Corner

Ideas and Information for People Caring for Others

March & April 2016 / 607-778-2411 / www.gobroomecounty.com/senior

Events for Caregivers

Managing Behaviors of Loved Ones with Alzheimer's

Date: **Wednesday, March 23**
Time: 2:30-3:30 PM
Place: Broome County Public Library Decker Room
185 Court Street,
Binghamton
Presenter: Alzheimer's Association

Behavior is a powerful form of communication and is one of the primary ways people with dementia communicate their needs and feelings when language is lost. Some behaviors can present challenges for caregivers. Join us to decode behavior messages, identify common behavior triggers, and learn strategies to help manage some of the most common behavior challenges of Alzheimer's disease.

Register by calling the Office for Aging at 778-2411.

Medicaid for Long Term Care

Date: **Tuesday, April 26th**
Time: 3:00-4:00PM
Place: Lourdes at Vestal, 2nd floor
3101 Shippers Rd, Vestal
Presenters: JoAnne Hall and Loretta Smith, Senior Examiners in Chronic Care Medicaid.

This presentation will provide information on the application process for Nursing Home Medicaid. The presenters will discuss different submission options as well as take any questions that you may have regarding this process.

To register, call the Office for Aging at 778-2411

Footwear, Cane & Walker Check

Date: **Wednesday, March 30th**
Time: 7:30-12:00 Noon
Place: Center Court Oakdale Mall
601 Harry L. Dr., Johnson City

Come and have your footwear, walkers and canes checked!

- A Podiatrist will be available to check for proper footwear
- Learn the correct way to use a cane and make sure it is a proper fit.
- Information on how to maintain your balance
- Tai-Chi for balance demonstration
- Information on senior services

Registration is suggested; call the Office for Aging at 778-2411

Caregiver Chat Groups

These informal chats are open to caregivers of any age.

Place: **Stay Healthy Center (Close to Sears)**
Oakdale Mall, Johnson City, NY

Date: Monday, March 7th
Monday, April 4th

Time: 1:00-2:30 PM



Place: **Broome West Senior Center**
2801 Wayne Street, Endwell, NY
Phone: 785-3427

Date: Wednesday, March 16th
Wednesday, April 20th

Time: 9:30-11:00 AM

Place: **Northern Broome Senior Center**
12 Strong's Place, Whitney Point

Date: Tuesday, March 1st
Tuesday, April 5th

Time: 9:30-11:00 AM

Don't Let Eye Disease Slow You Down

Thanks to advances in modern medicine, personal care and nutrition, there has been an explosion in the quality of life that adults are able to enjoy as they age. The pleasure that stems from having freedom and independence is immense, so what would you do if you were unable to enjoy the same things in life because of a loss of vision?

You may be at higher risk of developing eye diseases and conditions as you age, some of which can lead to permanent vision loss and blindness. Age-related eye diseases often have no symptoms, but can be detected in their early stages through a comprehensive dilated eye exam. Different from the basic exam you have for glasses or contact lenses, a comprehensive dilated eye exam allows your eye care professional to provide a full assessment of the health of your eyes. During this exam, he or she will put drops in your eyes to dilate the pupils and examine the backs of your eyes for any signs of eye disease. If diseases are detected, they can be treated early, before vision loss occurs. Here is a list of common age-related eye diseases and conditions.



Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) most often occurs among people age 60 and older. It gradually destroys the macula, the part of the eye that provides sharp, central vision needed for seeing objects clearly. Common risk factors are smoking, obesity, family history, and race, with Caucasians being the most likely affected.

Cataract is a clouding of the lens in the eye, most commonly associated with aging, but smoking, prolonged exposure to sunlight, and having diabetes are also risk factors. Cataracts make what you see appear cloudy or blurry, and can make it difficult to drive at night because of glare from lights.

Diabetic eye disease is a group of diseases associated with diabetes. The most common is diabetic retinopathy, which damages blood vessels in the retina. Leaky blood vessels cause dark spots to appear in people's vision. All people with diabetes, both type 1 and 2, are at risk. The longer a person has diabetes, the higher is his or her risk of developing

diabetic eye disease.

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that damage the optic nerve. Primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG) is the most common form and is a leading cause of blindness in African Americans and Mexican Americans. POAG has no early signs. As it progresses, peripheral vision begins to disappear. Left untreated, POAG can cause blindness.

If you are over age 50, making comprehensive dilated eye exams part of your routine health care is the best thing you can do to protect your sight. Don't wait to experience symptoms before you get your eyes examined because vision that is lost often cannot be restored.

For more information about eye health, caring for your vision, tips for finding an eye care professional, or a list of organizations that can help provide financial assistance for eye care, visit the National Eye Institute (NEI) Healthy Eyes Web site at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/agingeye>. NEI is one of the National Institutes of Health and is the federal government's lead agency for vision research that leads to sight-saving treatments.

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Editor's Note: If you have concerns with your vision after seeing a primary eye care provider, contact AVRE for a Functional Vision Assessment at 607-724-2428

How to Make Food Appealing

By Jeanne Stracuzzi & Amy Pessarchick

Seeing your loved one struggle with eating can be difficult. Finding foods that are nutritious and appetizing can be even more challenging.



There are many reasons that can cause a person to avoid eating.

Medication can alter the taste of some foods. An illness can also cause food to be undesirable. Contact your loved one's doctor

with any specific concerns.

Here are some ideas to keep in mind when providing care for someone.

Make sure that your loved one is getting enough fluids. Water is an important factor – dehydration can lead to a loss of appetite and confusion.

Provide your loved one with several small meals a day. Three large meals can feel like too much food for some. Try giving your loved one 6 smaller meals a day instead. Prepare meals that have lots of flavor and look appetizing to eat. Ask your loved one what foods taste good to them. Giving them a say in what foods are served helps them feel like they have some control in what they are eating.

Super charge milk by adding milk powder or protein powder. This double strength milk (see recipe to the right) added to drinks can be an easy way to add calories to your loved one's diet. Some people prefer soft foods such as puddings and smoothies; they can be easier to digest and very nutritious.

Make eating a pleasant time. Pointing out what they are not eating can often make mealtime more difficult. Reminiscing or talking about different recipes can help take their mind off how much they are eating or how they are feeling.

Exercise also is a great way to stimulate the appetite. Exercise does not have to be aggressive. Daily household chores or a short walk can be enough to increase appetite.

Be sure to contact your loved one's doctor for other suggestions or questions on medications that can have an impact on appetite and nutritional intake.

If you have any nutritional concerns regarding your loved one, please contact the Office for Aging Registered Dietitian for additional information and support at (607) 778-2368.

Caregiver Cuisine

Double Strength Milk*

2 2/3 cup whole milk powder

4 cups whole milk

Blend milk and milk powder in blender until mixed well

Refrigerate. Use as milk.

Super Pudding*

2 cups whole milk

3/4 cup dry milk powder

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 package (4 1/2 oz.)

instant pudding.

Mix milk, milk powder and oil.

Add instant pudding and mix well.

Pour into dishes and refrigerate.

*Recipes from *Pass the Calories Please*
by Gail Farmer, MS, RD.



National Disease –Specific Organizations Caregivers might find helpful:

ADEAR (Alzheimer's Disease Education & Referral Center)

(800) 438-4380 www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers

Alzheimer's Association

(800) 272-3900 www.alz.org

American Stroke Association

(Division of American Heart Association)

(800) 553-6321 www.strokeassociation.org

Huntington's Disease Society of America

(800) 345-4372 hdsa.org

National Parkinson Foundation

(800) 327-4545 www.parkinson.org

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Contributions are accepted to help support this program. No one is denied service because of an inability to contribute and all contributions are confidential.
To make a contribution, please send checks or money orders to Broome County Office for Aging, PO Box 1766, Binghamton, NY 13902.

Caregiver Corner

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Thank you!